CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Telecommunication Land Use License
Proposed Implementation Date:	1/1/13
Proponent:	3 Rivers Telephone Cooperative
Location:	Sec. 36, T18N, R7E, Sec. 16 T19N, R7E and Sec. 16, T19N, R8E
County:	Judith Basin & Cascade Counties Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

To provide telecommunication services to Raynesford area customers. A new fiber optic cable will be placed within an existing Right-of-Way Easement.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Mt. DNRC-Lewistown Unit Office
3 Rivers Telephone Cooperative
Lessees of State Leases: #4997, #7684, #8529 & #7192

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

None.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The "No Action" alternative.
The alternative to allow placement of the telecommunications cable within the existing R/W.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:
Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

There are no unusual geological features within the proposed project area. The licensed area is within an existing Easement following roadways that have been previously disturbed and assessed for cultural resources. The project area has been stabilized for the road bed. There should be no cumulative impacts.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

There is a very low probability of any water degradation from this project. No cumulative effects to water resources are expected.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Pollutants or particulates will not be produced. No cumulative effects are anticipated.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

The tame vegetation within the project areas will have minimal disturbance without need of revegetation. There are no rare plants or cover types present. No cumulative effects are expected.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Aquatic life will not be adversely affected. There are no aquatic habitats within the project area.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

At this time, no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources have been identified within the proposed project area.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

There are no historical, paleontological or archaeological resources present.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

This project will not be visible from any populated areas. There should not be any excessive noise or light associated with it. No cumulative effects are expected.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

There are no other activities nearby that should affect this construction process. No cumulative effects are anticipated.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

None.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Human health and safety will increase due to better telecommunications. There should be no negative impacts from this proposed project.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Better communications for all industrial, commercial and agricultural activities should be apparent from the completion of this project.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

New jobs will not be created. There are no direct or cumulative effects to the employment market.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The tax base will not be affected. There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes for this project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Additional services will not be required. No cumulative effects are anticipated.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

None.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Wilderness or recreational areas are not accessed through this tract. There is minimal recreational potential within the project area.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

Additional housing will not be a requirement of this project.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Disruption is not likely. There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the project.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

There should be no shift in the quality of the area.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

None

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Barny D. Smith
	Title:	Lewistown Unit Manager, TLMD-DNRC

Signature: /s/ Barny D. Smith **Date**: 12/17/12

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

The alternative to allow placement of the telecommunications cable within the existing R/W.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Minimal negative impacts are expected with this project. There will be more positive effects from the use of this newer communications system.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ] EIS [ ] More Detailed EA [X] No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Clive Rooney
	Title:	Area Manager, NELO-DNRC

Signature: /s/ Clive Rooney **Date**: 12/20/12